

WHAT IS CLAIMED IS:

A 5 1. A method for operating a telephone server comprises:
receiving an incoming call from a caller;
coupling the incoming call to a voice mail server;
coupling the incoming call to a voice mail mailbox with the voice mail server;
receiving a request from the caller to initiate an outbound call;
saving a state of the voice mail server in response to the request;
receiving dialing instructions from the caller;
10 processing the dialing instructions to make the outbound call; and
restoring the state of the voice mail server after the outbound call is
terminated.

15 2. The method of claim 1 wherein receiving the request from the caller to
initiate the outbound call comprises:
detecting a series of DTMF tones from the caller; and
determining the request in response to the series of DTMF tones.

20 3. The method of claim 1 wherein receiving dialing instructions from the
caller comprises detecting a series of DTMF tones from the caller.

4. The method of claim 3 wherein processing the dialing instructions
comprises dialing the series of DTMF tones to make the outbound call.

25 5. The method of claim 1
wherein receiving dialing instructions from the caller comprises detecting a
spoken phrase from the caller; and
wherein processing the dialing instructions comprises:
determining a telephone number associated with the spoken phrase; and
30 dialing the telephone number to make the outbound call.

6. The method of claim 1 further comprising determining a termination of the outbound call;

wherein restoring the state of the voice mail server comprises restoring the state of the voice mail server in response to the termination.

7. The method of claim 1 further comprising:
providing a dial tone to the caller in response to the request.

8. A computer program product for operating a telephone server including a processor comprises:

code configured to direct the processor to detect an incoming call from a caller;

code configured to direct the processor to couple the incoming call to a voice mail server;

code configured to direct the processor to couple the incoming call to a voice mail mailbox with the voice mail server;

code configured to direct the processor to detect a request from the caller to initiate an outbound call;

code configured to direct the processor to save a session of the caller within the voice mail server in response to the request;

code configured to direct the processor to detect dialing instructions from the caller;

code configured to direct the processor to process the dialing instructions to make the outbound call; and

code configured to direct the processor to restore the session of the caller within voice mail server after the outbound call is terminated;

wherein the codes are stored in a computer readable media.

9. The computer program product of claim 8 wherein the code configured to direct the processor to detect a request from the caller to initiate an outbound call comprises:

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code configured to direct the processor to detect a series of DTMF tones from the caller; and

code configured to direct the processor to detect the request in response to the series of DTMF tones.

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10. The computer program product of claim 8 wherein the code configured to direct the processor to detect dialing instructions from the caller comprises code configured to direct the processor to detect a series of DTMF tones from the caller.

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11. The computer program product of claim 9 wherein the code configured to direct the processor to process the dialing instructions comprises code configured to direct the processor to dial the series of DTMF tones.

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12. The computer program product of claim 8 wherein the code configured to direct the processor to detect dialing instructions from the caller comprises code configured to direct the processor to detect a spoken phrase from the caller; and

wherein the code configured to direct the processor to process the dialing instructions comprises:

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code configured to direct the processor to determine a telephone number associated with the spoken phrase; and

code configured to direct the processor to dial the telephone number .

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13. The computer program product of claim 8 further comprising code configured to direct the processor to determine a termination of the outbound call;

wherein the code configured to direct the processor to restore the session of the caller within the voice mail server comprises code configured to direct the processor to restore the session of the caller within the voice mail server in response to the termination.

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14. A telephone server comprising:
a processor; and

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a tangible memory coupled to the processor comprising:

code that directs the processor to couple an incoming call from a caller to a voice mail server;

code that directs the processor to detect a request from the caller to make a telephone call while the incoming call is coupled to the voice mail server;

code that directs the processor to store a location of the caller within the voice mail server in response to the request;

code that directs the processor to process instructions received from the caller to make the telephone call; and

code that directs the processor to return to the location of the caller within the voice mail server when the telephone call is finished.

15. The telephone server of claim 14 wherein the code that directs the processor to detect a request from the caller to make the telephone call comprises:

code that directs the processor to detect a series of DTMF tones from the caller; and

code that directs the processor to determine the request in response to the series of DTMF tones.

16. The telephone server of claim 14 wherein the code that directs the processor to process instructions received from the caller further comprises

code that directs the processor to detect a series of DTMF tones from the caller; and

code that directs the processor to dial the series of DTMF tones.

17. The telephone server of claim 14 wherein the code that directs the processor to process dialing instructions received from the caller further comprises:

code that directs the processor to detect a spoken phrase from the caller; and

code that directs the processor to determine a telephone number associated with the spoken phrase; and

code that directs the processor to dial the telephone number.

18. The telephone server of claim 14 further comprising code that directs the processor to determine when telephone call is finished; and

5 wherein the code that directs the processor to return to the location of the caller within the voice mail server comprises code that directs the processor to return to the location of the caller within the voice mail server after the telephone call is finished.

19. The telephone server of claim 14 wherein the code that directs the
10 processor to determine when telephone call is finished comprises code that directs the processor to detect a pre-defines series of DTMF tones.

20. The telephone server of claim 14 wherein the code that directs the
15 processor to determine when telephone call is finished comprises code that directs the processor to detect a dial tone.